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ABSTRACT

Computers are strategic tools in readying students for the future, as well as important learning tools for the present. The use of computers can help alleviate critical problems including low self-esteem, dropout rates, and illiteracy. This guide proposes making school computers accessible to students during times when schools are normally closed: before school, after school, on weekends, over vacations, and during the summer. Opening school doors beyond regular school hours will give more children more opportunities to prepare themselves for technology in the next century, and will establish the school as a true community-wide educational resource. The guide presents 12 steps to starting a program: (1) State Your Objectives; (2) Recruiting a Leader/Planning Team; (3) Defining Your Program; (4) Naming Your Program; (5) Choosing Your Location and Hours; (6) Designating Equipment; (7) Defining Participants; (8) Motivating Your Staff; (9) Involving Your Community; (10) Funding Your Program; (11) Promoting Your Program--including sample promotional materials; and (12) Evaluating Your Program. The "Program Ideas" section provides ideas for after-hours activities, both structured and unstructured. The "Exemplary Programs" section presents brief outlines of 17 real programs in action, and includes contact names and phone numbers of educators involved in those programs. Programs discussed include community-wide and all-school programs, as well as one-time events and structured programs for specific groups. (SWC)

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